

TRANSFER SCHOLARSHIP INITIATIVE

Expanding Access for Underserved Populations

Sparked by a \$1.5 million challenge grant from the Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, Berkeley's Transfer Scholarship Initiative has raised more than \$3 million in new funding over the past five years to expand opportunity for low-income and underserved students. Increasing the number of scholarships for transfer students is essential in ensuring access to a world-class education for the best and brightest students who bring unparalleled richness of life experience and academic excellence to Berkeley.

As an institution, Berkeley serves more students with severe financial hardship than all the Ivy League universities combined. In most years, about 8,000 Berkeley undergraduates come from families earning less than \$45,000 per year. However, the campus only has enough scholarships for 2,500 of these students. In addition, one third of Berkeley's undergraduate population has transferred into Berkeley. For these students, scholarships are usually even more essential. Most students use the transfer pathway to save money on their education. Many will be the first in their families to attend college. Some are juggling responsibilities for children, are orphans or former foster youth, or are healing from traumas experienced in war zones. All have worked incredibly hard to earn their place at Berkeley, as transfer admission rates have historically been almost as restricted as freshman admission. To their credit, transfer students graduate at the same rates as students who enter Berkeley as freshmen.

Since 2009, with the leadership of the Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, Berkeley has created 11 new endowed scholarships for transfer students who demonstrate academic excellence, financial need, and leadership in community service. The fund's matching grant of \$1.5 million inspired friends and alumni alike to make additional gifts ranging from \$50,000 to \$500,000. To date, this has translated into financial assistance for 22 students — a number that will continue to grow as the scholarship endowments grow.

Program Highlights, Accomplishments and Impacts

The impact of scholarship programs is best relayed by what the hard-working students have been able to accomplish through their opportunities at Berkeley:

- » **Paolo** graduated from the top science high school in the Philippines, and his senior high-school thesis was published in the Philippines government science research network. However, the only job he could get in the United States was waving a signboard for a sandwich shop. Paolo worked his way through Mount San Jacinto College in San Jacinto, California, and transferred to Berkeley's Electrical Engineering and Computer Science program with support from the endowed Banatao Family Scholarship Fund.
- » **Della** is a returning student and the mother of two children. She is also an underrepresented minority and first-generation college student. Her award from the Hirschfield Hansen Family Scholarship makes it possible for her to attend Berkeley full time. Della plans to pursue a Ph.D. to teach at the university level and is mentoring other students of color as she makes her own educational journey.

- » As an Army veteran deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq, **Luis** immigrated to the United States from Mexico when he was four years old. He is a first-generation college student who received The Regents' and Chancellor's Community College Transfer Scholarship for Science Majors. "I can focus entirely on school without having to worry about how I will survive," Luis said.
- » **Caitlin** received the "top graduate" award from the aircrew technical training school while in the Air Force. As a recipient of The George A. Miller Scholars Program Endowment, she will take an ethnographic approach to studying the "maker" or "do it yourself" movement in the Bay Area with interviews at a shelter that teaches 3D printing and other trade and craft skills to homeless people.
- » **William** is a psychology major and also a Miller Scholar. Having facilitated writing workshops at San Francisco Juvenile Hall for 10 years, he is interested in alternatives to detention centers for young people. William plans to pursue a Ph.D. in psychology to teach at the university level.

This sampling of just a quarter of Berkeley's 2014-15 recipients demonstrates the breadth and drive of students whose lives are improved by the transfer scholarships.

Future plans include continued provision of existing and additional scholarships critical to meeting financial aid needs among transfer students whose presence enhances campus diversity in important ways. Endowments, by their nature, grow over time, but the need for scholarships far outstrips the funds available. Increasing the number of awards will be a priority for Berkeley as the campus continues meeting its public mission of serving students from all segments of California and enriches the academic experience for all Berkeley students, preparing them to succeed in a global economy.